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Social development: social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, China, Colombia, Ireland, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Poland and Qatar: draft resolution

Cooperatives in social development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 47/90 of 16 December 1992, 49/155 of 23 December 1994, 51/58 of 12 December 1996, 54/123 of 17 December 1999, 56/114 of 19 December 2001, 58/131 of 22 December 2003, 60/132 of 16 December 2005, 62/128 of 18 December 2007, 64/136 of 18 December 2009, 65/184 of 21 December 2010, 66/123 of 19 December 2011, 68/133 of 18 December 2013 and 70/128 of 17 December 2015 concerning cooperatives in social development,

Recognizing that cooperatives, in their various forms, promote the fullest possible participation in the economic and social development of local communities and all people, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, are becoming a significant factor of economic and social development and contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger,

Recognizing also that as cooperative enterprises often serve the socially excluded and vulnerable sectors of the population that profit-driven businesses tend to neglect, they are therefore important for the support of socially inclusive policies that drive inclusive development, particularly in developing countries,

Recognizing further the important contribution and potential of all forms of cooperatives to the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the third United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat III), including their five-year reviews, the World Food Summit, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda,

Welcoming the adoption of the outcome document of the United Nations summit, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable

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Development",[1] and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[2] and noting the acknowledgement therein of the role of cooperatives in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and in relation to financing for development,

Noting with appreciation the potential role of cooperative development in the improvement of the social and economic conditions of indigenous peoples and rural communities,

Welcoming the efforts of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to showcase the role of agricultural cooperatives, including in improving food security and nutrition, particularly in rural areas, promoting sustainable agricultural practices, improving the agricultural productivity of farmers and facilitating access to markets, savings, credit, insurance and technology,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[3]

2. *Notes with appreciation* the celebration of the International Year of Cooperatives, in 2012;

3. *Encourages* all Member States, as well as the United Nations and all other relevant stakeholders, to share best practices identified through activities implemented during the International Year of Cooperatives and to continue those activities, as appropriate;

4. *Recalls* the draft plan of action on cooperatives for 2012 and beyond, based on the outcome document of the expert group meeting held in Ulaanbaatar in 2011 for the promotion of cooperatives for sustainable socioeconomic development, to promote focused and effective follow-up to the activities of the International Year, within existing resources;

5. *Draws the attention* of Governments to the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General to focus support on cooperatives as sustainable and successful business enterprises that contribute directly to employment generation, poverty and hunger eradication, education, social protection and the creation of affordable housing options across a variety of economic sectors in urban and rural areas and to review existing legislation and regulations to make the national legal and regulatory environment more conducive to the creation and growth of cooperatives by improving existing laws and regulations and/or by establishing new ones, especially in the areas of access to capital, competitiveness and fair taxation;

6. *Invites* Governments and international organizations, in partnership with cooperatives and cooperative organizations, to strengthen and build the capacity of all forms of cooperatives, especially those run by the poor, young people, women, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, so that they can empower people to transform their lives and communities positively and build inclusive societies;

7. *Invites* Governments to strengthen efforts to enhance food security and nutrition and to focus efforts on smallholders and women farmers, as well as on agricultural cooperatives and farmers' networks, supported by measures to improve access to markets, enable domestic and international environments and strengthen collaboration across the many initiatives in this area, including regional initiatives;

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[1] Resolution 70/1.

[2] Resolution 69/313, annex.

[3] A/72/159.

8. *Encourages* Governments to promote access to information and communications technologies as a vital channel for collaboration and the expansion of cooperatives, especially in rural areas;

9. *Also encourages* Governments to intensify and expand the availability, accessibility and dissemination of evidence-based research on the operations and contribution of cooperatives, to develop a statistical framework for the systematic collection of comprehensive data on and the best practices of cooperative enterprises, in collaboration with all stakeholders, and to raise public awareness of the linkages between cooperatives and sustainable development, especially in the areas of social inclusion, employment creation, poverty eradication, inequality reduction and peacebuilding;

10. *Invites* Governments, relevant international organizations, the specialized agencies and local, national and international cooperative organizations to continue to observe the International Day of Cooperatives annually, on the first Saturday of July, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 47/90;

11. *Invites* Governments, in collaboration with the cooperative movement, to develop programmes aimed at enhancing the capacity-building of cooperatives, including by strengthening the organizational, management and financial skills of their members, while respecting the principles of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and to introduce and support programmes to improve the access of cooperatives to new technologies;

12. *Invites* the international community and cooperative movement, in the spirit of win-win cooperation and to create a shared future based on our common humanity, to support Governments of the least developed countries in creating a favourable environment for cooperative growth and encouraging greater networking and capacity-building among cooperatives to reap the power of cooperatives for social and economic development, with an emphasis on rural development and on increasing the participation of older persons, young people, women and girls, especially in the leadership of cooperatives;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in cooperation with the relevant United Nations and other international organizations and national, regional and international cooperative organizations, to continue rendering support to Member States, as appropriate, in their efforts to create a supportive environment for the development of cooperatives, integrating cooperative values, principles and business models into educational programming, including school curricula, as appropriate, providing assistance for human resources development, technical advice and training and promoting an exchange of experience and best practices through, inter alia, conferences, workshops and seminars at the national and regional levels, within existing resources;

14. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution.